



*Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary*

**Behavioral Health Administration**

Aliya Jones, M.D., MBA  
Deputy Secretary/Executive Director  
55 Wade Ave., Dix Bldg., SGHC  
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June 10, 2020

Dear Maryland Behavioral Health Community,

In an effort to keep patients and health care workers safe during the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) temporarily expanded the telehealth services available to Marylanders. While telehealth offers many benefits, the expanded flexibilities were intended to be temporary, and we now have updated information to share.

The flexibilities the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) has been able to offer health care providers during this time are based on both Executive Orders from the Governor of Maryland and waivers from the federal government. We are glad these flexibilities have been tremendously helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic. The federal waivers that allow for telephonic and non-HIPAA compliant technology are scheduled to sunset in tandem with the end of the federal Public Health Emergency. These flexibilities are not likely to be granted on a permanent basis by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Unless the Secretary of the federal Department of Health and Human Services takes action to either extend the waivers or make the flexibilities permanent, **these flexibilities are currently slated to end on July 25, 2020.**

We are committed to behavioral health care for all and we will work to help with this transition.

One area that the Department will examine closely is the flexibility to expand services delivered via telehealth in a patient's home. Services provided in the home setting are not currently reimbursable through Maryland Medicaid; however, standard coverage rules do allow states to reimburse for services in the home setting. The Department will conduct analyses to determine if it would be appropriate to continue reimbursement for services delivered via telehealth in the home setting after the end of the Public Health Emergency.

We thank you for your input and patience in providing behavioral health services during these difficult times. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or additional suggestions.

Sincerely,

Aliya Jones M.D., MBA  
Deputy Secretary Behavioral Health